

The John McPhee Reader (John McPhee Reader, #1) By John McPhee His fertility his precision and grace as a stylist his wit and uncanny brilliance in choosing subject matter his crack storytelling skills have made him into one of our best writers: a journalist whom L. Sissman ranked with Liebling and Mencken who Geoffrey Wolff said is bringing his work to levels that have no measurable limit who has been called a master craftsman so many times that it is pointless to number them. In the same year he published his first book *A Sense of Where You Are* with FSG and soon followed with *The Headmaster* (1966) *Oranges* (1967) *The Pine Barrens* (1968) *A Roomful of Hovings and Other Profiles* (collection 1968) *Levels of the Game* (1968) *The Crofter and the Laird* (1970) *Encounters with the Archdruid* (1971) *The Deltoid Pumpkin Seed* (1973) *The Curve of Binding Energy* (1974) *Pieces of the Frame* (collection 1975) and *The Survival of the Bark Canoe* (1975). In the same year he published his first book *A Sense of Where You Are* with FSG and soon followed with *The Headmaster* (1966) *Oranges* (1967) *The Pine Barrens* (1968) *A Roomful of Hovings and Other Profiles* (collection 1968) *Levels of the Game* (1968) *The Crofter and the Laird* (1970) *Encounters with the Archdruid* (1971) *The Deltoid Pumpkin Seed* (1973) *The Curve of Binding Energy* (1974) *Pieces of the Frame* (collection 1975) and *The Survival of the Bark Canoe* (1975). Since 1977 the year in which McPhee received the Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the bestselling *Coming into the Country* appeared in print Farrar Straus and Giroux has published *Giving Good Weight* (collection 1979) *Basin and Range* (1981) *In Suspect Terrain* (1983) *La Place de la Concorde Suisse* (1984) *Table of Contents* (collection 1985) *Rising from the Plains* (1986) *Heirs of General Practice* (in a paperback edition 1986) *The Control of Nature* (1989) *Looking for a Ship* (1990) *Assembling California* (1993) *The Ransom of Russian Art* (1994) *The Second John McPhee Reader* (1996) *Irons in the Fire* (collection 1997) *Annals of the Former World* (1998).

{site_link} {site_link} It's probably a cliché to say that John McPhee is a writer's writer but that's only because he never seems to have the same acclaim among more casual readers. The first John McPhee reader is a well-edited collection showcasing selections from his first dozen books and cover everything from the cultivation and selling of fruit (*Oranges*) an in-depth profile of two tennis stars (*Levels of the Game*) the quirky scientists who design and built atomic bombs (*The Curve of Binding Energy*) the head of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (*A Roomful of Hovings*) and more. Taken as a whole it's nothing short of stunning that McPhee is able to cover so much ground and do it all so well; he feels equally at home going into scientific workings of nuclear propulsion as he does writing about basketball. The excerpt from *Encounters with the Archdruid* is so detailed you feel not only like you're riding in a canoe down the Colorado River but that you know both Floyd Dominy and David Brower are party to their fighting and know it's because they're both equally passionate about their work. Certainly there are some topics that will interest the reader more than others (for this soul those offerings would include *Georgia Atlantic City* the *Pine Barrens* and *Arthur Ashe*) so it doesn't really serve as a book per se. English Loved the creative non-fiction masterclass in McPhee's "Searching for Marvin Gardens" essay and some of the more sobering profiles like the implications of nuclear technology in the future (*The Curve of Binding Energy*) down to the day to day life of a sort of savant-yokel-priestess that eats roadkill for sustenance in the name of conservation and ecological praxis (*Travels In Georgia*). Didn't really care for the sections borne out of his northeastern ivy league boarding school lens so I skimmed the sections of his more biographical writing and was far more interested in his way of seeing issues and topics far out of his element (in terms of class and scholastic background especially) English John McPhee is a renaissance man. Basketball tennis oranges hydrogen bombs bark canoes dams wingless flying vehicle medieval relics and the people playing growing inventing flying building studying and opposing them are his subject matter. The story of McPhee visiting the World Trade Center in the early 70's with a physicist who explains how the building could be brought down by a small easily-assembled nuclear bomb was horrifyingly eerie. Collections like this are often disjointed and fragmentary but not here: each section stands on its own each is a minor masterpiece each tells a story and the editor's introductory analysis of McPhee's style is masterful in its own way. He wrote many more after that--about Alaska about the geology of the western US (three books a bit heavy with geology jargon) about an ocean

trip with the US merchant marine also stories about bears in New Jersey about attempts to contain the mighty Mississippi and lava flows on Iceland and so forth up to his recent Ransom of Russian Art his twenty-third. The books excerpted here touch on canoeing in Maine on travels through the sparsely populated (yes!) center of New Jersey and on dreamers or visionaries (pick your choice) who plan trips to the stars by controlled atomic explosions and others who fly a craft that is a hybrid between an airplane and an airship. McPhee's first book was an admiring portrayal of a talented basketball player he got to know during college years: Bill Bradley later became US senator from New Jersey and a serious contender for the US presidential nomination. A century hence if anyone would like to understand the peculiar creativity that made twentieth century America the great country it is he might well find the clearest answer in McPhee's true-to-life explorations. It is perhaps preferable to read these books in full rather than the snippets that are presented here but this is a great way to encounter McPhee for the first time in this well-edited sampler of his greatest hits. I was familiar with a good number of these selections but the book piqued my interest in several books of his that I haven't read yet (particularly *The Pine Barrens* and *A Roomful of Hovings and Other Profiles*). That said I think that John McPhee is one of the two best American reporters (along with Studs Terkel) and that this collection does a great job of providing an introduction to his work.

The John McPhee Reader first published in 1976 is comprised of selections from the author's first twelve books. In 1965 John McPhee published his first book *A Sense of Where You Are*; a decade later he had published eleven others: *The John McPhee Reader* (John McPhee Reader #1) Princeton University and Cambridge University educated John Angus McPhee. His writing career began at Time magazine and led to his long association since 1965 with the New Yorker as a staff writer, Both *Encounters with the Archdruid* and *The Curve of Binding Energy* were Princeton University and Cambridge University educated John Angus McPhee: His writing career began at Time magazine and led to his long association since 1965 with the New Yorker as a staff writer: Both *Encounters with the Archdruid* and *The Curve of Binding Energy* were nominated for National Book Awards: Selections from these books make up *The John McPhee Reader* (1976): *Annals of the Former World* McPhee's tetralogy on geology was published in a single volume in 1998 and was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1999. Of course as anybody who's read McPhee before knows the core of this book is based around two kinds of writing: writing about people and writing about nature, His trip in a birchbark canoe is just as good as a working vacation to a Scottish island, It's all good and like the best anthologies it made me want to pick up each individual volume: English This is as good of an introduction to McPhee's body of work as any, Editor William L Howarth provides quality overviews at the beginning of each excerpt, However I'd skip the intro which is just too flowery and long-winded. And the reader comes away with amazing understanding of his subjects, This is a collection of excerpts from McPhee's first 12 books edited and introduced by William Howarth: Bill Bradley went on to be US Senator and I suspect the orange industry in Florida has changed, So far we haven't tried space flight powered by hydrogen bombs. I had to trudge through some of these and others were amazing. English I heard about John McPhee from new friend who was gobsmacked I didn't know who he was: This reader is a collection of writings from several books McPhee wrote. He's a master of non-fiction storytelling draws you in to sit/stand/walk/paddle/ride next to him: His writing gives you the impression he's a master observer that he never disturbs a scene or spooks a subject always catching them in the truest light, English Most readers have a favorite author and mine is probably John McPhee. A writer of non-fiction he takes delight in exploring unconventional aspects of our society presented through colorful individuals and described in crisp and scintillating language. This book is a sampler containing excerpts from a dozen books an admirable introduction for anyone new to McPhee's style, First published in 1976 it is still in print like other books by McPhee, As the above list shows McPhee's interests are rather wide-ranging: All these sparkle with apt metaphors (Generally speaking if I had a choice between hiking and peeling potatoes I would peel the potatoes), And the descriptions are intimate and personal: all are based on first-hand

experiences by McPhee as he follows his subjects wherever they take him, I ought to admit here that his point of view is somewhat masculine but there is more than enough in his writings to attract any reader: in *Oranges* he tells practically all you might want about Florida's sunshine product, You not only learn the ins and outs of Indian River oranges (it's a lagoon not a river) but also how Ossian B. Hart later governor of the state played his violin to an audience of alligators: Four years later he wrote an equally admiring book about a nearly unknown young Black tennis player from Richmond Virginia Arthur Ashe, And in *Travels in Georgia* a wilderness adventure he describes his meeting with Governor Jimmy Carter: All these are included here as is an encounter between David Brower head of the Sierra Club and an opponent of Brower a prominent pro-development westerner: Both were invited by McPhee to share a rafting trip down the Grand Canyon: In each generation only a handful of books endure and become part of the literary heritage handed down from generation to generation, It is too early to tell but McPhee's writings may well end up in this class. English A marvelous introduction to the depth and breadth of John McPhee a journalist's journalist one of the finest living nonfiction writers: Enthusiastically recommended especially to would-be essayists and those with boundless curiosity about the known world. English McPhee is ideal for readers who have outgrown Hunter S, He is sometimes dragooned into the ranks of the 'New Journalists' - wrongly: Unusual for an American writer McPhee is so self-effacing you wonder whether his shoes even leave footprints: He seems capable of injecting almost subject - canoes sports nuclear physics oranges - with interest and he writes with an unflashy quietly stylish grace, This is a collection of excerpts from McPhee's first twelve books and is perhaps the best introduction to his oeuvre: English I realize that giving five stars to a reader is sort of like saying that some band's greatest hits album is your favorite CD. English I first started reading John McPhee's essays when they would show up from time to time in the *New Yorker*, Having a large collection of his essays in one place is great.E. *The Founding Fish* was published in 2002. And as this collection shows that's a damn shame. And in the book's strongest sections McPhee does both. But that's only one section. Highly recommended. He writes with depth flair and humor. The collection was published in 1976. Looking forward to reading more. He also has the gift of digging up unusual stories--e.g. And he uncovers interesting characters sometimes precociously so. And much much more. Thompson and seen through Tom Wolfe. I rather envy anyone coming to it for the first time. The words stuck the ideas taught and the subjects delighted. English



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